

**TWO STATEMENTS
BY THE POLITICAL-DIPLOMATIC COMMISSION
OF THE FMLN/FDR OF EL SALVADOR**

**A
MASSACRE
IN EL SALVADOR'S
MORAZAN PROVINCE**

December 7-17, 1981

**ON PRESIDENT REAGAN'S CERTIFICATION
FOR AID TO EL SALVADOR**

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**CONDEMNATION OF THE MASSACRE
IN COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN MORAZAN PROVINCE
DURING THE OPERATION LAUNCHED IN THE AREA
BETWEEN DECEMBER 7-17, 1981**

**Political-Diplomatic Commission FMLN/FDR
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ON PRESIDENT REAGAN'S CERTIFICATION FOR AID TO EL SALVADOR

**STATEMENT OF THE FMLN/FDR'S
POLITICAL DIPLOMATIC COMMISSION
ON PRESIDENT REAGAN'S CERTIFICATION
REGARDING THE SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR**

February 1, 1982

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ADDENDUM

An article reprinted from the *New York Times*, "Massacre of Hundreds Reported in El Salvador," by Raymond Bonner, January 28, 1982.

PART TWO

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To members of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States

A letter signed by over 350 religious leaders in the United States. Released February 16, 1982.

THE MASSACRE



INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

It is an internationally recognized fact that for more than a year El Salvador has been involved in a generalized armed conflict between the forces of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and those of the Salvadorean government, presided over by Jose Napoleon Duarte.

The generalization of the conflict and the constant suffering of the Salvadorean people led the governments of France and Mexico to recognize the Democratic Revolutionary Front—Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FDR-FMLN) as a representative political force on August 28, 1981. This recognition of the FDR-FMLN was a step in seeking a political solution to the conflict that would bring peace to the country, as well as contribute to the stability of the Central American region. Likewise, the United Nations General Assembly called for a political solution to the conflict and respect for human rights in El Salvador in a December 16, 1981 resolution.

There have been countless condemnations of the continuing violence directed at the civilian population. The worst cases of this violence have been at the La Arada village and Sumpul River on May 14, 1980, where over 600 Salvadorean children, women and elderly were killed; at Mt. Carmelo, Soyapango on April 7, 1981 when 23 people were taken from their home and massacred in the streets; and the massacre at La Cueva Pintada on April 16, 1981 where over 200 Salvadoreans died as a result of artillery fire by helicopters of the Salvadorean Air Force.

Up until now, over 30,000 people have died in the Salvadorean conflict; the majority have been civilians not participating—directly or indirectly—in combat. More than half a million refugees and others displaced from their customary homes are living in subhuman conditions, and within the country are subject to police surveillance and repression. In addition there are one-thousand political prisoners and as many people who have “disappeared.”

THE WAR FRONTS AND THE CIVILIAN POPULATION

Since January 10, 1981 the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation has established four well-defined fronts:

- the “Feliciano Ama” Western Front;
- the “Modesto Ramirez” Central Front;
- the “Anastacio Aquino” Para-Central Front;
- and the “Francisco Sanchez” Eastern Front.

These areas are inhabited by 45% of the Salvadorean population, primarily artisans and peasants. (See Map #1)

Since the military operations of the two armies began, over 300,000 refugees have migrated to the center of the country, and a further 50,000 have gone to Honduras and Nicaragua, victims of repression by the Salvadorean Army. Nevertheless, the majority of the people have remained in the FMLN zones of control or on the periphery of the fronts. These people have remained for economic reasons, reasons of custom, out of sympathy with the FMLN, or simply neutrality.

Because of El Salvador's small area and high population density, the FMLN zones of control stretch over many communities in the countryside, whose inhabitants have chosen to stay, living closely with the FMLN.

In areas of the FMLN fronts, there are two types of inhabitants. The people within the FMLN zones of control live closely with the FMLN, voluntarily contributing their agricultural and other products for the sustenance of both themselves and the guerrillas. Those who live on the periphery of the FMLN fronts live by themselves, declaring themselves neutral. They define their neutrality as an acceptance of the FMLN front, with a recognition that there are two contending armies. They have decided not to participate in the conflict, mainly from religious belief, and devote themselves exclusively to their agricultural and artisan work.



An FMLN member helps an old woman cross the river during an evacuation.

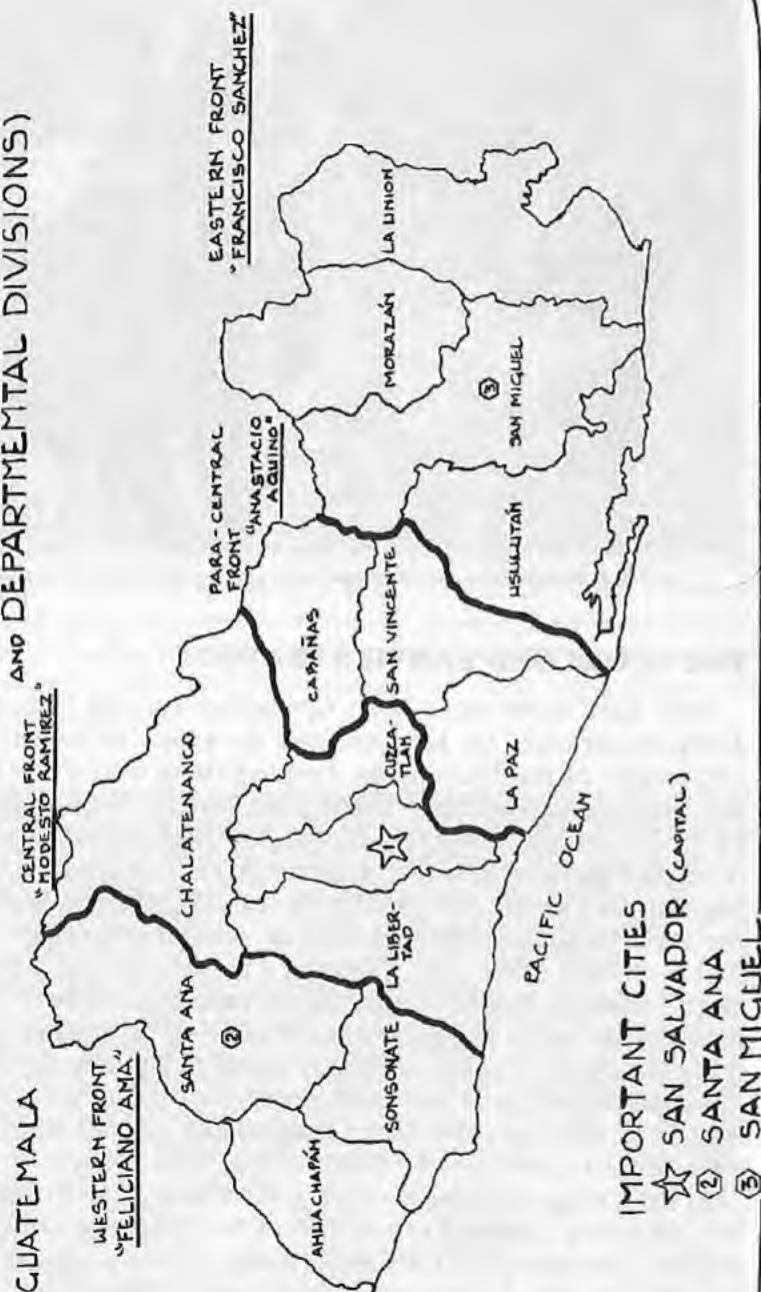
THE SCORCHED EARTH STRATEGY

Each time there have been operations by the Salvadorean Army or our own, we have secured the safety of both types of inhabitants of the front areas, keeping them out of the line of fire, and evacuating them to safe places when this is demanded by the conditions of the war. Despite these efforts, the total lack of respect shown by the Salvadorean Army towards the civilian population has left a considerable toll of dead and wounded, particularly among those who live on the periphery of the FMLN fronts, who have become victims of the "scorched earth" strategy carried out by the Salvadorean Army. This strategy—designed by United States advisors—is nothing less than a policy of extermination of the Salvadorean civilian population.

According to the Salvadorean Army, the objective of this strategy is to eliminate the social base of the FMLN fronts, while cutting off supplies to the FMLN, especially of food.

At first, the government employed a tactic of generalized terror, including constant repression of the civilian population in the areas peripheral to the FMLN fronts. This was accomplished by sending the Salvadorean Army and paramilitary groups directly into the small hamlets. The aim of this tactic was to force the people to flee to the center of the country or to Honduras. It resulted in hundreds of deaths and half a million refu-

MAP OF EL SALVADOR, CENTRAL AMERICA (WARFRONTS OF THE FMLN AND DEPARTMENTAL DIVISIONS)



gees. As the people resisted having to abandon their homes, and the refugee problem grew in complexity, the Salvadorean Army made a decision to exterminate the peripheral population, kill their farm animals and burn their fields. Thus, since April 1981, the civilian population itself has become a military target. Salvadorean Army units were ordered to kill all people and animals encountered either on the periphery of the fronts or inside FMLN zones of control.

On April 14, 1981, over 200 peasants fleeing the Salvadorean Army sought refuge in a cave known as La Cueva Pintada and were killed by helicopter artillery fire directed at them by the Salvadorean Army during operations in Chalatenango, near the Honduran border. This massacre was condemned by numerous sources, including the Honduran Church. On May 14, 1980, during another Army operation in Chalatenango, about 600 people were killed as they sought refuge across the Sumpul River in Honduras. The victims—mostly children, women, and old people who were not involved in fighting—were massacred this time with the cooperation of the Honduran Army. The Salvadorean Air Force shelled the river, and those who successfully managed to cross the river were met by bullets from the Honduran Army. Other massacres have occurred in Cabañas and Morazán. The Salvadorean Army has also been known to enter the refugee camps in Honduras and kill peasants who had fled there.

It is difficult in such cases to argue that the troops are "out of control," or that it was an "accident." The Salvadorean Army acts with premeditation, carrying out orders to kill civilians and burn their fields, because each peasant is seen as a collaborator with the guerrillas. The Army's military plan, then, includes the extermination of the civilian population.

THE SALVADOREAN ARMY OFFENSIVE AGAINST MORAZAN PROVINCE, DECEMBER 7-17, 1981

THE "FRANCISCO SANCHEZ" EASTERN FRONT

The "Francisco Sanchez" front is located in the east of El Salvador, and is one of the FMLN's best organized fronts. The front includes the following areas:

1. In the province of Usulután, the area from the Lempa River to the villages of Tres Calles and Jiquilisco;

PROVINCE OF MORAZAN EL SALVADOR



ADVANCE OF THE SALVADORAN JUNTA'S ARMED FORCES IN DECEMBER 1981 OFFENSIVE

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. SAN FERNANDO | 6. OSICALA |
| 2. TOROLA | 7. CACAOPERA |
| 3. PERQUIN | 8. YOLOAIQUIN |
| 4. JOATECA | 9. SAN FRANCISCO GOTERA |
| 5. LA GUACAMAYA | |

2. Also in the province of Usulután, the area of Jucuarán that includes the villages of Chirilagua and Intibuca;

3. In the province of La Unión, the area from the foothills of the Conchagua Volcano to the villages of Intibuca and Chirilagua; and

4. In the province of Morazan, from the banks of the Torola River to the northern area bordering Honduras; this area also extends toward the northern part of the province of San Miguel. (see Map #2)

Thousands of peasants and artisans live in this area, contributing their produce to meet the needs of all the people there. They live in these areas, or on the periphery, but are not directly involved in the war.

The FMLN respects these peasants. In the areas of the fronts, the FMLN medical units not only attend to the needs of the combatants, but also to those of the civilian population in the area. Given the religiosity of the Salvadorean people, both Catholic and Protestant religious services take place within these areas. The FMLN likewise guarantees all of the minimum conditions necessary to protect the lives of the people who are living in the midst of the war. *Radio Venceremos*, the official voice of the FMLN, operates from this area.



Last year, the Salvadorean Army launched four large operations against the Francisco Sanchez Front. The last one began December 7, 1981 and lasted ten days. The Salvadorean Army employed the scorched earth strategy extensively, as it had previously done in the provinces of Chalatenango and Cabanas. The current operation left over 1,000 dead, deliberately massacred, as described in the following pages.

EVENTS BETWEEN DECEMBER 7TH AND 17TH.

On Wednesday, December 9th, Salvadorean newspapers reported that the Salvadorean Army had begun a counterinsurgency military operation in the province of Morazan (the "Francisco Sanchez" front of the FMLN). The same newspapers mentioned that forces of the infantry, artillery and air force were participating, in combination with the Security Corps, Treasury Police, National Guard, and Civil Defense Patrols.

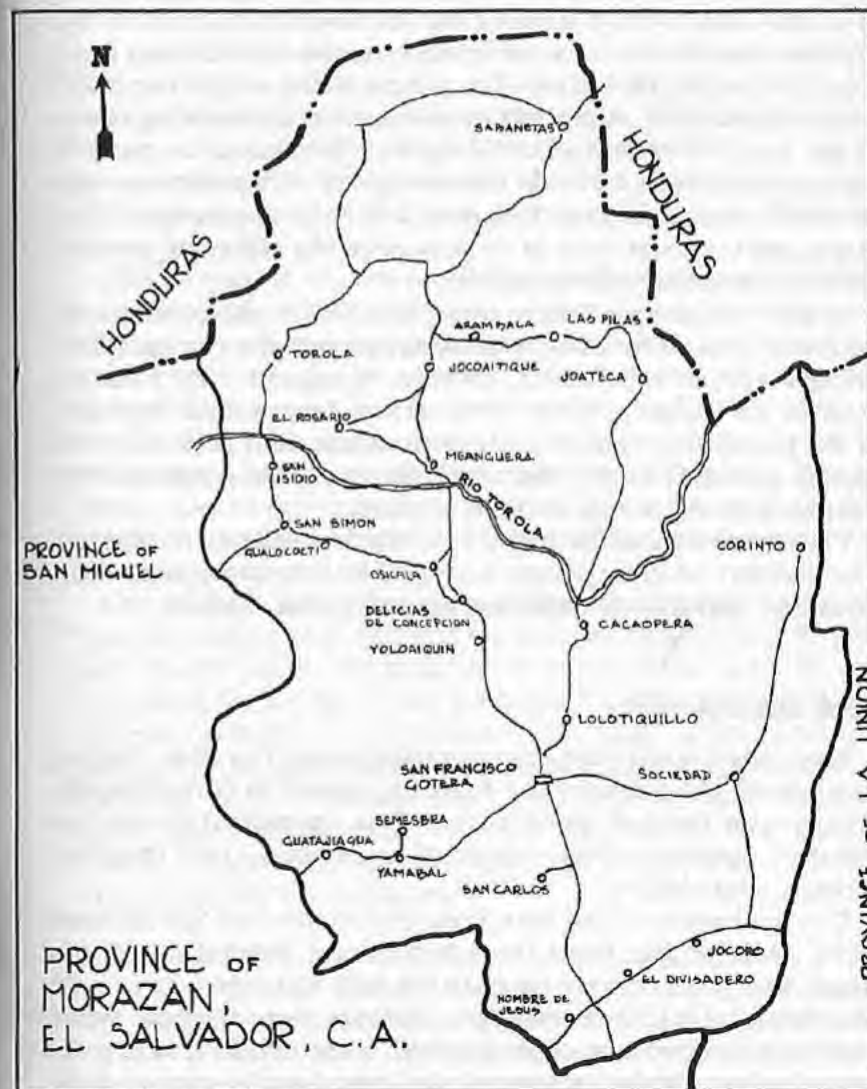
They stated that "all access roads to San Francisco Gotera and other communities in the province of Morazan are subject to strict military control and that two International Red Cross Ambulances on the way to the area were stopped and forced to return in order to avoid exposure of the occupants to possible crossfire between the Salvadorean Army and guerrillas of the FMLN." (see Appendix 5)

This operation was of the type called "anvil and hammer," and received wide publicity over several days.



On December 6th, over 4,000 Salvadorean Army troops, trained by U.S. advisors, began to arrive at San Francisco Gotera, capital of Morazan province. They advanced as far as the village of Osicala, where they established a center of command and set up the 105mm Howitzer artillery pieces. From there, troops were transported in eight helicopters to the villages of San Fernando, Perquin, Joateca, Arambala, Meanguera, and Jocoaitique. The operation was designed in the following manner: The Salvadorean Army would advance from

eight directions, converging on the FMLN positions. From the north, they would advance from Torola, San Fernando, and Perquin, towards Canaberales, Zapotal, Cerro Pericon, Arambala, El Mozote, and Comaro. From the northeast, another advance would begin from Joateca towards El Zapotal, El Limon, and Guachipilin. From the south, troops would advance from Cacaopera towards Aqua Blanca. Meanwhile, other forces would maintain control over the paved road between San Francisco Gotera and the Meanguera Bridge, which passes from Yoloaquin to Delicias de Concepcion, between the hamlets of Ojos de Aqua and Villa El Rosario. (see Map #3)



The government advances were supported by 90mm light artillery and 60mm mortar fire. When necessary, they relied on 105mm Howitzers and the air force. Given that the encirclement was in the process of formation, the FMLN used a delaying tactic with part of its forces, allowing for a gradual encirclement. The rest of the guerrilla troops controlled the territory in the enemy's rear guard, breaking the encirclement in these places and assuring that the enemy's attacks were wasted.

Within the radius of the military operation, the medical, religious, and militia personnel of the FMLN called upon the civilian population to move with the guerrilla troops to the rear guard. This was the most effective means to safeguard the civilians, since prior experience demonstrated that if the civilians remained in the encircled area, the Salvadorean Army would not spare their lives. The people living within the FMLN front immediately organized themselves upon receiving notice of the encirclement, and on December 7th, began to move in various directions towards the rear guard. They were accompanied by FMLN medical, religious, and militia personnel. They organized themselves so as to guarantee the safety of women, children, and the elderly mainly.

In the periphery of their front, the FMLN also advised the people to join those already heading towards the rear guard. In villages such as Los Toriles, La Joya, Manguera, Cerro Pando, Mozote, La Capilla, Lajitas, Soledad and Arambala, a large part of the population wanted only to maintain their neutrality and remain in their homes. They said that since they were honest people, nothing would happen to them.

They were repeatedly urged to leave, but insisted on staying. The majority of these people belonged to Protestant denominations and had always remained neutral in the conflict.

THE MASSACRE

The "anvil and hammer" operation lasted ten days. During this period, the Salvadorean Army succeeded in occupying the villages and hamlets listed above. This operation, planned in advance, resulted in the deaths of more than 1,000 children, women, and elderly.

The testimony of the survivors shows that the Salvadorean Army took people from their homes and formed them in a single line. Women were taken to the hills and raped, later to be machine-gunned. Some children's throats were slashed, while other children were machine-gunned. Some children were even burned alive. Similar treatment was meted out to men and the

elderly. Those who refused to leave their homes were machine-gunned or burned alive inside. All were accused of collaborating with the guerrillas.

Some hamlets were totally scorched. Once its inhabitants had been killed, the huts would be burned and even the domestic animals would be killed. The survivors say that pleas for mercy were useless, as were the cries of mothers as they watched their children being forced to march in a single file line to their death. The troops would not listen to the people when they asserted that they were neutral in the conflict, being peasants and Protestants. Their pleas fell on deaf ears.

Once the Salvadorean Army finished its offensive, the survivors helped in an investigation to establish the identity, sex and age of the numerous bodies found decomposing and being eaten away by vultures. Up to now, we have counted 1,009 bodies, of which 217 have been identified. Of those identified, 97 are under 14 years of age and 120 are adults from various hamlets. Some people have been identified by first name only; others are so mutilated that it is impossible to establish their identity.

The hamlet of El Mozote was completely burned. Mounds containing up to 40 bodies have been found, indicating that they were gathered together to be killed. We also found children with their throats slashed, even pregnant women with their bellies ripped open. The survivors of these atrocities declare that the crimes were committed by troops of the Salvadorean Army, mainly from the Atlacatl Brigade.* The survivors also swear that there were no guerrillas in these communities, that the people were unarmed, and that they were mostly women and children.

One should note that units from the Security Corps, the Treasury Police and National Guard participated in this operation. For 50 years, and most significantly in the last year, these units have been responsible for numerous massacres and generalized conditions of repression in the cities. They control the actions of the paramilitary squads, and bear responsibility for the death of the American nuns, as has been clearly established by several investigations. Thus the purpose of these units accompanying the Salvadorean Army has been to carry out plans to exterminate the population.

* The elite Atlacatl Brigade was trained by U.S. Green Berets in 1981. It is armed and supplied by the U.S. government and acts as a rapid deployment counter-insurgency force.

A CALL UPON THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY

As we condemn the acts detailed above, we want to stress that there has existed no legal or political means by which to investigate these atrocities, attribute responsibility for them, and moreover to insure the safety of the primarily rural civilian population living in or near the areas of conflict. The lack of such a remedy makes it impossible for the International Red Cross or others to protect the civilian population, to tend to those wounded in the conflict, and generally to assure compliance with the Geneva Accords of August 12, 1949.

In spite of the numerous attempts to find a just solution to the conflict and to secure respect for human rights, very little has been accomplished to end the suffering of the Salvadorean people, who daily are victims of repression by the Salvadorean Army, Security Forces, and paramilitary groups.

Before the conscience of the world community, before the competent international bodies and governments that have recognized us as a representative political force, we condemn yet another gross violation of human rights committed by the Salvadorean Army and government; and in recognition of the Salvadorean people's right to self-determination and respect for its most basic human rights, we request that you take the necessary steps to investigate the occurrences herein detailed, establish responsibility for the actions, and demand application of the provisions of the Geneva Accords to the Salvadorean government.



Gamma / Liaison

APPENDICES

- 1 Locations of the massacre
- 2 Number of dead by location
- 3 Name, age and place of residence of the identified victims to date
- 4 Statistical summary
- 5 Press news about the military operation in Morazan
- 6 January 4, 1982 report by *Radio Venceremos*
- 7 Testimonies of the massacre:
 - 1—Carlos Ernesto Rivas, soldier
 - 2—Under-Sergeant Manuel Antonio Rosales
 - 3—Rufina Amaya
 - 4—Anastacio Sosa
 - 5—Juan Marquez
 - 6—Doroteo and Freddy, testimonies aired by *Radio Venceremos*

APPENDIX 1

Locations of the massacres

—Mozote	—Yancolo
—Los Toriles	—Flor del Muerto
—Cerro Pando	—Soledad
—Aqua Fria	—La Joya
—Poza Honda	—Las Lajitas
—La Capilla hamlet in the village of Barrilla Negra	—Arambala

APPENDIX 2

Number of Dead By Location

Partial figures up to 12/26/81

Los Toriles	65
La Joya and Meanguera	143
Arambala	5
Soledad	8
Lajitas	16
La Capilla	20
Cerro Pando	180
Poza Honda	100
El Mozote	472
TOTAL . . .	1009

NOTE: These are partial figures. The number of dead in small hamlets are not included.

APPENDIX 3

VICTIMS

Name, age and place of residence
of the victims of the massacre.

LA CAPILLA HAMLET IN THE VILLAGE OF BARRILLA NEGRA

Juan Saravia and his 8 children	35
Florinda Liscano	32
Miguel Saravia	40
Chón Saravia	70
Santos Vásquez	29
José de la Paz Vásquez	17
Chona Diaz and her 5 children (This woman and her 12 year-old daughter were both raped.)	

TOTAL: 7 adults

13 children

LA JOYA VILLAGE UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MEANGUERA

Juan Sánchez	7
Teodora Ramirez	60
Felipa Martinez	58
Josefa de Ramirez	59
Maria Argueta	66
Patricia Argueta	23
Leopoldo Argueta	7
Juan Argueta	2
Antonia Ramirez	45
Ismael López	56
José Santos Montes	11
Maria Santos Sánchez	28
Eugenia Santos	11
Maria Martinez	35
Maria de Jesús López	7
Dolores López	4

Jacinto Sánchez	78
Dominga Sánchez	35
Argelia Sánchez	12
Noemy Sánchez	8
Rigoberto Sánchez	5
Juan Jacinto Sánchez	3
Tránsito Ramírez	30

TOTAL: 12 adults

11 children

FLOR DEL MUERTO HAMLET

Natividad Pérez	19
Octavia Pérez	1
Santos Carlos Ortiz	40

TOTAL: 2 adults

1 child

EL POTRERO HAMLET OF THE VILLAGE OF LA JOYA UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF MEANGUERA

Francisca Sánchez	59
Priscila Sánchez	17
Isidro Sánchez	5
Wendy Sánchez	1
Crunilda López	28
Arnoldo López	11
Francisco López	7
Joaquin López	6
Alberto López	5
Fabián López and his family	

TOTAL: 3 adults

7 children

The López Family, unknown number

EL RINCON HAMLET IN THE JURISDICTION OF JOCOAITIQUE

Gregorio Madariaga	28
Arnoldo Madariaga	10
Ester Madariaga	8
Cecilia Madariaga	4
Clarissa Maradiaga	2

TOTAL: 1 adult

4 children

YANCOLO HAMLET

Crecencia Pérea	25
Santos Máximo Pérea	32
Manuel Pérez	20
Tanislá Pérez	8
Rómulo Pérez	5

TOTAL: 3 adults

2 children

CERRO PANDO HAMLET

Albino Ramirez	60	Fermina Márquez	40
Juana Ramirez	10	Petronila Martinez	12
Sinforoso Reyes	45	Ventrua Martinez	18
Eugenia Diaz	30	Sebastián Martinez	10
Santos Diaz	8	Juan Etamuseno Martinez	8
Reyna Diaz	14	Idelfonso Martinez	6
Dinora Diaz	8	Maria Martinez	4
The Martinez Family:		Nefatli Martinez	9 months
Catalino	35	Domingo Reyes	38
Fermina	30	Ignacia Martinez	35
José Santos	12	Francisco Martinez	10
Maria Bartola	10	Antolina Martinez	8
Luisa	9	Mateo López	60
Celestino	6	Agustin Martinez	55
Patricio	4	Matea Martinez	24
Noemi	2	Angelina López	8
Eustaquio	26	Atilio López	15
Gloria Luna	28	Saturnino López	13
Delmi	1	Margot López	11
Martin	45	Ana Midiana López	9

Vicente Pereira	12	Felipe Chicas	45
Florentina Lopez	7	Cristina Argueta	11
Victoriana Martinez	80	Mario Tito Argueta	9
Luciana Martinez	12	Maria Dolores Martinez	25
Orbelina Martinez	6	Rosalda Argueta	24 (pregnant)
Catalino Arguet	85	Ovidio Argueta	10
Francisca de Argueta	80	Gervacio Argueta	50
Justo Martinez	60	Juana Argueta	45
Mario Angel Argueta	55	Marcelina Argueta	12
Tomás Martinez	28	Maclovio Argueta	10
Esteban Martinez	22	Cándido Argueta	9
Faustino Martinez	25	Carlos Argueta	7
Freddy Martinez	14	Miguel Angel Argueta	35
Maria Martinez	18	Domingo Reyes	30
Gregorio Martinez	14	Tomas Argueta	26
Maximo Argueta	48	Luciana Argueta	10
Edilberto Reyes	45	Aristides Argueta	8
Sidencio Argueta	22	Francisco Argueta	6
Rosario Argueta	18	Sara Argueta	4
Basilio Argueta	16	Jeremias Argueta	1 month
Lucia Argueta	35	Saturnina Diaz	30
Antonio Quevedo	28	Eusebia Diaz	13
Juan Chicas	50	René Diaz	6
Ciriaco Argueta	48	Estela Vigil	2
Feliciano Argueta	23	Teresa Diaz	40 days old
Gervacio Argueta	20	Balbina Vigil	18
Venancia Argueta	12	Graciela Diaz	20
Nicolasa Argueta	10	Timoteo Argueta	40
Eugenia Argueta	8	Romana Pereira	35
Tránsito Argueta	10	Maria Ramos	80
Maria Santos Argueta	19	Patricia Argueta	90
Jacobo Argueta	6	Enemesia Diaz	78
Teresita de Jesús Argueta	1	Miguel Argueta	60
Leonicio Argueta	50	Bernabé Guevara	49
Féliz Diaz	45	Maria Ramos	65
Orbelina Argueta	15	Juancho Argueta	53
Maria Argueta	13	Elifonso Méndez	50
Rosario Argueta	11	Marta Méndez	18
Pánfilo Argueta	9	Agustina Méndez	15
Regina Argueta	56	José Méndez	13
Maria Mártir Portillo	50	Eliberto Méndez	10
Matilde Argueta	20	José Leon Méndez	8
Silvina Argueta	18	Gabriel Méndez	6
Felipa Argueta	16	Jorge Martinez	95
Joaquina Argueta	13	Arcadio Pereira	16
Berta Chicas	19	Lucrecia Pereira	14

Leonicia Mejia	38
Andrés Chicas	19
Aurelia Ramirez	80
Nazaria Argueta	80
Rafael Mejia	35
Leonicia Argueta	32
Catalino Argueta	11
Tiburcio Mejia	60
Elena Portillo	45
Marcos Ramos	80
Jacoba Martinez	18
Santiago Argueta	65
Reyna Ramos	19

TOTAL: 87adults

62 children

To this list add 30 children whose identities have not been established.

POZA HONDA

Fátima Pérez 27
(She had given birth to a son two days earlier. . . He was also killed.)

EL MOZOTE HAMLET (incomplete list)

José Fabián Luna	28
Alicia Claros	33
Lucio Claros	5
Carmen Claros	3
Hernán Claros	1
Maria Marcos Reyes	30
Francisco Reyes	33
Maria Nely Reyes	3
José Arnaldo Reyes	2
José Aristides Reyes	2
José Aristides Reyes	8 months

This list is still incomplete (1/4/82)

TOTAL: Undetermined, since the names of approximately 400 persons have not been established.

APPENDIX 4

MASSACRE OF MORAZAN STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Based on the Names and Ages of Victims Identified Up To 12/30/81

CHILDREN		A D U L T S					TOTAL
		Men 15-30	Women 31-45	Men Over 46 years	Women Over 46 years	Total Men Over 15 years	
SEX AGE	Less than 14 years						
LOCATION							
	1	—	1	—	—	1	1
	1	—	1	—	—	—	1
	62	15	21	9	12	45	42
	13	1	1	3	1	5	2
	11	1	2	—	3	3	9
	7	—	2	—	1	—	3
	4	1	—	—	—	1	—
	2	1	1	1	—	2	1
TOTAL		101	19	29	14	13	25
						57	59
							217

Appendix 5

LA PRENSA GRAFICA Wednesday, December 9, 1981

ARMY BEGINS COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATION YESTERDAY

The Army initiated a counterinsurgency military operation yesterday throughout the province of Morazan in search of extremist strongholds located in the dense mountains of this region, according to authorities in the provincial capital of Gotera.

Participating in the military sweeps are air force, infantry and artillery units combined with the Security Forces; national police, treasury police and the National Guard.

The operation has the support of civil defense patrols from several of the most important towns in this province, among them Perquin, Joateca, Jocoaitique and others.

CONTROL

All access roads to Gotera and other towns in the province of Morazan are under strict military control in order to stop the penetration of extremist groups into these areas.

Controls have also been set up at all the entrances and exits to these areas. Civilians and private vehicles are denied entrance into the areas where there is fighting in order to avoid "accidents."

NO ACCESS

Spokespersons for the armed forces also stated that they have been maintaining strict control on the highway leading to Gotera, the capital of Morazan province, registering all vehicles and taking the names of all pedestrians entering or leaving the city.

Two ambulances of the Salvadorean Red Cross that approached the area were stopped by military authorities and forced to return to their stations to make sure—according to the spokesmen—that the passengers would not be caught in fighting between soldiers and guerrillas.

The police said today that six guerrillas and two Army soldiers died yesterday in a battle in the foothills of the San

Salvador volcano, 40 kms. northeast of the capital. The report added that four other persons were found shot in the city of San Miguel, but that no left or right-wing group had as yet taken responsibility for the action.

In the town of Apopa, some 18 kms. east of San Salvador, a group of heavily armed guerrillas attacked the local military command post. No casualties were reported.

ANOTHER REPORT

San Salvador, Dec. 8 (UPI) by John E. Newhagen

Government forces, led by soldiers trained by North American "Green Berets," began an offensive against guerrillas in the rebel-dominated province of Morazan, local military commanders reported today.

An officer of the National Guard reported that the forces assigned to the offensive included contingents from the nearby provincial capitals of San Miguel, La Union, and Usulután, as well as the Green Beret-trained Atlacatl infantry brigade.

The military official added that the attack was focused upon Jocoaitique, which is located on the main highway near the Honduran border.

In the past month, the insurgents have sabotaged the highway with barricades, trenches, and mines, forcing government helicopters to transport supplies by air to isolated villages, according to official spokespersons for both the armed forces and *Radio Venceremos*, the radio station of the insurgents.

Venceremos predicted the current government offensive last week, and military sources asserted that one of their main objectives is the capture of *Radio Venceremos*.

According to the insurgents, who have been transmitting from Morazan for the last year, "technical problems" kept the rebel station off the air since last week.

The National Guard added that it plans to clean out the nests of guerrillas near the villages of Jocoito and Ciudad Barrios in Morazan, located south of the provincial capital of San Francisco Gotera, 163 kms. northeast of San Salvador.

Appendix 6

A REPORT FROM THE SCENE OF THE OCCURRENCES

On January 4, a mobile unit of *Radio Venceremos* transmitted a special program from the vicinity of the village of Mozote in northeastern Morazan province. Here we present selections from that transmission:

"Right now we are nearing the village of Mozote... there are no signs of life at all; first we are approaching the church of Mozote, and from only a few meters can see the destruction wrought there: the side of the church is burnt..."

"The church is totally destroyed; the religious plaques (stations of the cross) are bullet-ridden, the place where some of the artifacts used for mass were kept has been destroyed by blows from rifle butts."



"Now we are leaving the church; at the side where the sacristy had been, they tell us, all the men have been buried... so here in this place are the cadavers of all the men of Mozote. Now we are picking out of the rubble what were the holy objects used for mass; there is a penetrating smell indicating that beneath the rubble are countless bodies of the residents of Mozote. We bear

witness to terrible scenes in this vestibule; we are faced with diabolical scenes, patches of human hair, a finger in the rubble..."

"In this blue house where we are right now, we recall the little girl who always sat there on the bench, and the three or four other children who would sit there and weave ropes out of maguey...and now, in this house that we are visiting, everything is totally destroyed; it appears as if a tornado had passed through here, and all of the belongings have been stolen..."

"We are in the neighboring house, where Marcos Argueta and his wife lived with their many children."

"...Tell us how all of this happened..."

"We would find houses burned down everywhere... I had a sister in Toriles who had 11 children and they killed all of them, they took them out of the house, pointed machine-guns at them and killed them with M-16 rifles; we found 76 spent M-16 cartridges there."

"Were your children killed there?"

"Yes, but I don't know what happened to them, only that they killed them, because you can't find anyone here; since yesterday I have been searching for their bodies..."

"What ages were they..."

"One was ten years old, another eight, and one was four."

"Before us is one of the most terrible scenes we will have ever seen in our entire lives: the remains of children totally charred, mutilated little hands, pools of blood."

"At this moment we see a peasant carrying the skull of one of his children in his hands...he desperately continues to search for his other children, trying to recognize them..."

Appendix 7

TESTIMONY OF A SOLDIER— CARLOS ERNESTO RIVAS

"What is your name?"

"My name is Carlos Ernesto Rivas."

"Could you tell us what you and the others saw at the village of Cerro Pando?"

"Yes, what happened was that as our unit passed by that small village, we saw many women—among them a pregnant woman lying dead, there on her bed with her children...in reality it was very painful for us."



"And did you also see dead along the road?"

"No, not on the road. Some of the soldiers entered the houses and told the rest of us about this... well, they told us—'Look in here, there are ten dead people in this house.' In others there were five, some children—poor little children—underneath the bed, another with its mother—they remained in their mother's embrace."

"And what do the soldiers who did not participate in that massacre think about what their fellow soldiers did?"

"That they should not have done that—killing so many children, and the animals we found there in the streets... they are truly imbeciles to have killed so many innocent children. They should be directing their fire against armed men, but in reality are aiming at innocent people."

TESTIMONY OF MEDIC AND UNDER-SERGEANT— MANUEL ANTONIO ROSALES CHAVEZ

"What is your name?"

"My name is Manuel Antonio Rosales Chavez; I am a medic and an under-sergeant."

"When you entered the village of La Guacamaya, did you pass by Cerro Pando, and what did you see there?"

"Yes...but there are things I don't want to remember because the truth of what I saw was very sad. The truth is that at the time I was not able to comment about this with anyone, because the moment there is a comment, then from that moment on, they begin to categorize you as their opponent. I don't even like to think about this, but the truth is that this was the first experience that I have had, and it has verified for me that the truth is not as the High Command of the Salvadorean Army says. I expected to come upon some dead, since they had already told us that we would encounter them. Along the way we had encountered the troops who had carried out this operation, and they told us that they had killed many guerrillas. But then we saw the houses, and for the first time in my life I was overwhelmed by horror, confronted by such a massacre. I realized that it was not as they had said because I saw dead children, I saw the mother with her arms around one of them, perhaps the youngest one..."

"Describe to me how they were killed. Were they decapitated or tortured, or were they shot to death?"

"Well, I refused to look any further, so I only saw inside this house. I saw that all of those here had been machine-gunned."

"What comments did the soldiers who accompanied you make about the dead bodies of the children and women?"

"The first thing they asked was what unit it was that had passed by there, because they themselves would never have done this; the children have no blame in this, they don't even really know what is going on, the truth is that there was no justification for this. They tell us we are going into combat, but against someone who has weapons, not against these people in the countryside, not against the poor. If that is the case, then we are damned."

"And now that you have seen the ways in which the Atlacatl Brigade acts, evidently under orders received from the High Military Brigade of the Salvadorean Army, what do you have to say about the actions being carried out by the Salvadorean Army in the countryside?"

"Well, I can say that the actions they are engaging in are negative, because what they are doing through these actions is to destroy a whole population."

TESTIMONY OF THE SURVIVOR RUFINA AMAYA

"Companera, could you please tell us your name?"

"Rufina Amaya."

"We understand that you were both a victim as well as a witness to the massacre in the village of Mozote. Could you please tell us what happened?"

"On Friday, December 12, they arrived and began to take people from their homes at five in the morning. They lined them up in the small plaza in front of the open hearth (fire pit) and held them there. The children were naked, and very cold; from there they took them to some houses and locked them up. The men were locked in the church and they locked us up in the house of Alfredo Marquez, where they kept us without food or water until six in the afternoon. At high noon, they killed the men. At two in the afternoon they took the young women to the hills, where they stayed until six the next morning. There, they killed the young women and burned them, after having raped them. The men were blindfolded and killed, and I saw them from a little window in the house in which we were held. The old women were the first to be taken out and killed. First they killed Margarita Vasquez, afterwards Vincente Delvin, and then they killed more of the old women—one named Aurelia, and another named Bartola and neither one could walk any more, since each one was at least 80 years old."

"Rufina, could you explain to us how it was that you were able to save your life?"

"As they were taking us to tie us up at the place where they were going to kill us, I hid behind a small apple tree, later

behind a pineapple plant. There I remained, holding a small branch with my hand so the killers never saw me. Then they killed every last one of the women; I saw clearly how they finished killing the women, and then burned them. Later, they did a final search for survivors, but I stayed in a hidden spot, waiting for a chance to leave, since they had not detected me. Right there in front of me was the lieutenant with some others, all of the soldiers talking about how they weren't from this area, and that they had been sent here with orders to kill people..."

"Can you tell us what else you were able to hear of the conversations between the soldiers after the massacre in El Mozote?"

"I heard that Lieutenant Ortega was the killer—he was the one who gave the orders to kill the children and everyone. The clothes that they wore were camouflaged with black; they also said they belonged to the Death Squad, and that they had jumped from a plane into a meadow...I heard them say that they were going to behead and choke the children to death, and I believe that is what happened, and they beheaded and choked the children to death; there were no shots heard, only the crying of the children, and their shouting to their mothers that the government soldiers were killing them. From Mozote, no one escaped alive except me, because they killed all of the families there. They killed four of my children and my husband, Domingo Claro, who had poor eyesight—he could barely see, he could only see when wearing glasses."

TESTIMONY OF THE SURVIVOR ANASTACIO SOSA

"Mr. Anastacio Sosa, can you tell us what the Atlacatl Brigade did here in La Joya?"

"...They have brutalized old men, pregnant women, and children three months old, and they have burned them and beheaded them. They caught up with me in the river and took us to a cave where they told us that they wouldn't kill us, that they only kill their enemies. But I escaped into the bush because I knew they had killed lots of people."

"Did they kill your family?"

"Yes, my children and my wife, whose name was Maria E. Martinez. The children's names were Jose, David..." (The rest of the transmission is inaudible.)

"They have killed our children, many old people, pregnant women, men with all their children; I have buried 28 people. I stayed in a cave for two days, not knowing what was going on,

and it wasn't until they arrived to take us from the cave that I realized they had come to kill all the people there, and they left signs that said: 'Solidarity with the idiot guerrillas from here in Morazan who always gorged themselves with shit.' That is what the signs said, and they also said that they, the Atlacatl Brigade, were the little angels from hell, and that they were going to bring the fires of hell down upon us."

TESTIMONY OF JUAN MARQUEZ, FROM THE HAMLET OF RANCHERIAS

"What is your name?"

"Juan Marquez."

"Could you give the names of some of the people killed?"

"Yes: Elinecio Rodriguez, Maxima Rodriguez, Leonarda Marquez, Domitila, the wife of Ignacio; Catalino Rodriguez, Narcias Marquez; as you can see, they killed almost everyone. Here in this small community, only Locadio Marquez survived...we were all Protestants, we weren't mixed up in anything. All of these people have died without knowing why. Here we can see the dead body of a child clinging to its mother, the child has a hole made by an M-16 bullet. This is where we have found the greatest number of children dead. You can smell death in the air—it's unbearable..."

TESTIMONY OF SURVIVORS OF THE MASSACRE, AS BROADCAST BY RADIO VENCEREMOS

On December 29, 1981, in its morning broadcast, *Radio Venceremos* presented the testimonies of two survivors of the massacre, referred to as the "December Massacre" by the radio station.

A mobile unit of *Radio Venceremos* carried out the interviews from "Someplace in Morazan," in a house where several families had taken refuge. All were formerly inhabitants of La Joya, one of the villages where the massacre had taken place.

The first testimony was given by Doroteo and the second by Freddy.

"Doroteo, could you tell us what you saw in regard to the killings carried out by military forces in the village of La Joya?"

"On Thursday, the tenth, at about three-thirty in the afternoon, they went into the house next door to ours. Then at 3:30 p.m., they began shooting machine guns. Then while they were searching for us around the meadows and houses, we left with the children."

"How many children do you have?"

"I have four little girls and my brother also has four. When we left there, each one of us left with four children."



Gamma / Liaison

"How was it that you all survived?"

"As they strafed us and shot mortars at us, we hid really well along the sides of the fences and on the ground to avoid getting hurt."

"Did you stay in the village that night?"

"Yes. That night we stayed in the village, in the shrubbery and ravines. From there we left at 10:00 p.m. and headed for El Rincon, where we stayed eight days. After eight days, the soldiers also came there to search... we stayed there with the children, in all about 65 people including adults and children."

"Can you tell us what happened in the village of La Joya?"

"In La Joya, on Friday, they came in at seven and began killing people. First was Lorenzo Vigil, his daughter and her 6 month old baby. From there they went to the next house, where they killed the wife of Atilio Ramirez. Next they saw the women walking down the ravine, and they piled them up over by Sotero Guevara's house. From there they went off to where Patricio Diaz and his family with four children lived. They tied their hands, and then killed them. From there they continued on downhill, killing the women, slaughtering cattle, horses—everything that crossed their path, even very old people. They killed a little old man who was 80 years old. Most of the women and children were killed, because most of the women were alone with their children."

"About how many people were killed in La Joya?"

"Up to yesterday, there were 193."

"How many children?"

"133 children."

"How many bodies were there? Did you see them?"

"At Santiago Chavarria's house there were 27 people, including children and adults. They were all inside the house when soldiers set it ablaze. They took out the children and set them afire, all of them were charred, all burnt alive."

"When you entered the village of La Joya, what did you think when you saw so many people dead?"

"At the time, we just thought we had been lucky because we were the only ones left. They chopped off my mother's head—they killed her as she lay on her bed, wrapped in a blanket, and they left her there. They raped and killed my sister, who was pregnant, and they killed her three small children, the oldest of whom was seven."

"Why didn't the residents of La Joya leave before the Army's military forces arrived?"

"They were told what was coming, but it didn't occur to them that such things as those that happened were possible."

They stayed because they thought nothing would happen to them; those who thought otherwise all left."

"Is there a guerrilla front in the area of La Joya?"

"No, the only people there were laborers... and the children in La Joya screamed and cried for their mothers and all of them were kicked to the ground and then killed—some of them had their necks broken, and others were burned alive. One soldier almost went crazy because the child wouldn't die. First the soldier stabbed him, and then poured gasoline on him, and the child still didn't die. When he saw this, he shot the child with a machine gun, and then the child died."

TESTIMONY OF FREDDY

"What is your name?"

"Freddy."

"Can you tell us for *Radio Venceremos* what happened in La Joya?"

"When the Army entered La Joya, they destroyed all the houses. The people left their houses and headed toward the main road. There, the Army gathered about thirty of the townspeople together to begin killing them. Then the troops came to get the rest, and took the eight or so families who had stayed in their houses along with all of the children, to the main road, leaving the houses empty. They only left people in one house where there was a disabled person who could not walk, and an old woman who was sick and was also unable to walk—they left them in that house. Everyone else was taken out to the main road to be killed. I saw that the soldiers were taking people down the hill. I thought they were taking the women off to the village, but that they were not going to kill them. Then I saw them take a detour through a farm where my uncle lives. I saw that it was getting late and that they had not come out of there, and then I heard machine-gun fire, and I thought they must be killing the women. You could see the cloud of dust raised by the machine-gun fire and after that I didn't see any people again. After three days all of the soldiers left, and I went down the hill to see what had happened. I found a mound of people outside the farm, and then some others who had been burnt—about 30 people inside the farm, because when they took everyone inside, they killed them. The people outside the ranch were all in a heap... now you can go into La Joya, since all of the soldiers have gone. Now they are patrolling Calle Negra and they come up all the way to La Joya every day. When they leave, they take with them all the chickens of the people they killed, the cattle, the pigs... even the corn."

The New York Times

Massacre of Hundreds Is Reported in El Salvador

Special to The New York Times

JANUARY 28, 1982

MOZOTE, El Salvador — From interviews with people who live in this small mountain village and surrounding hamlets, it is clear that a massacre of major proportions occurred here in December.

In some 20 mud brick huts here, this reporter saw the charred skulls and bones of dozens of bodies buried under burned-out roofs, beams and shattered tiles. There were more along the trail leading through the hills into the village, and at the edge of a nearby cornfield were the remains of 14 young men, women and children.

In separate interviews during a two-week period in the rebel-controlled northern part of Morazán Province, 13 peasants said that all of these people, their relatives and friends, had been killed by Government soldiers of the Atlacatl Battalion in a sweep in December.

733 Victims Listed

The villagers have compiled a list of the names, ages and villages of 733 peasants, mostly children, women and old people, who they say were murdered by the Government soldiers. The Human Rights Commission of El Salvador, which works with the Roman Catholic Church, puts the number at 926.

A spokesman for the Salvadoran armed forces, Col. Alfonso Cotto, called the reports about "hundreds of civilians" being killed by Government soldiers "totally false." Those reports were fabricated by "subversives," he said.

It is not possible to determine independently how many people died or who killed them. In the interviews, the peasants said uniformed soldiers, some swooping in by helicopters, did the shooting. The rebels in this zone are not known to wear uniforms or use helicopters.

"It was a great massacre," 38-year-old Rufina Amaya told a visitor who traveled through the area with those who are fighting against the junta that

now rules El Salvador. "They left nothing."

Somewhere amid the carnage were Mrs. Amaya's husband, who was blind, her 9-year-old son and three daughters, ages 5 years, 3 years and 8 months.

Mrs. Amaya said she heard her son scream: "Mama, they're killing me. They've killed my sister. They're going to kill me." She said that when the soldiers began gathering the women into a group, she escaped and hid behind trees in back of the houses.

From Dec. 8 to Dec. 21, according to Salvadoran newspapers, soldiers from the Atlacatl Battalion took part in a sweep through Mozote and the surrounding mountain villages as part of one of the largest search-and-destroy operations of the war against the leftist guerrillas who are fighting to overthrow the United States-supported junta. According to the villagers, no Americans accompanied the troops on the sweep.

280 Children Reported Slain

Asked whether the Atlacatl Battalion had been involved in an operation in the northern mountainous region of Morazán in December, Col. Cotto said he could not provide specific details about military operations.

"We have been at war since 1979 against the subversives," he said. As part of that war, he said, air force and army units, including the Atlacatl Battalion, are continually conducting operations throughout the country.

In Mozote, 280 of the 482 peasants killed, according to the list the villagers have prepared, were children under 14 years old. In Capilla, villagers say the soldiers murdered a father and his nine children, a mother and her five; in Cerro Pando, 87 adults and 62 children.

The Human Rights Commission has at other times also charged the army with killing large numbers of civilians during its operations. According to the commission, more than 100 were killed

in the northern part of the province of Cabañas in November; 143, including 99 children under 16 years old, were said to have been killed in San Vicente in October, and about 300 in Usulután in September.

Under banana trees at the edge of a cornfield near this village were 14 bodies. A child of about 5 or 6 years old was among the heap. Spent M-16 cartridges littered the dirt about 15 to 20 feet from the bodies. The rebels do have some M-16 rifles captured from army units, and they are standard issue for the Atlacatl Battalion.

A few peasants, handkerchiefs or oranges pressed against their noses to help block the stench, poked among the rubble for anything salvageable.

Up the mountain trail a short distance, 12 recently cut wood planks about 10 inches by three-eighths of an inch by 12 feet were propped against the trees. On the patio of the adobe hut, saws and crude homemade machetes and hammers were stained with blood.

Inside, five skulls were strewn among the smashed tiles. The men were carpenters, according to a boy who was working among beehives behind the mud hovel.

Mrs. Amaya said the first column of soldiers arrived in Mozote on foot about 6 P.M. Three times during the next 24 hours, she said, helicopters landed with more soldiers.

She said the soldiers told the villagers they were from the Atlacatl Battalion. "They said they wanted our weapons. But we said we didn't have any. That made them angry, and they started killing us."

Many of the peasants were shot while in their homes, but the soldiers dragged others from their houses and the church and put them in lines, women in one, men in another, Mrs. Amaya said. It was during this confusion that she managed to escape, she said.

She said about 25 young girls were separated from the other women and taken to the edge of the tiny village. She said she heard them screaming.

"We trusted the army," Mrs. Amaya said when asked why the villagers had not fled. She said that from October 1980 to August 1981, there had been a regular contingent of soldiers in Mozote, often from the National Guard. She said that they had not abused the peasants and that the villagers often fed them.

Rebel leaders in this region said Mozote was not considered a pro-rebel village. But the guerrillas did say that 3,000 of their supporters had fled the area when the army came in.

When the soldiers and helicopters began arriving in the village of La Joya, the older boys and men fled, said 46-year-old César Martínez.

"We didn't think they would kill children, women and old people, so they remained," he explained. But, he said, the soldiers killed his mother, his sister and his sister's two children, aged 5 and 8 years. He said that among the others the soldiers killed were a 70-year-old woman and another woman and her 3-day-old baby.

On the wall of one house, Mr. Martínez said, the soldiers scrawled, "The Atlacatl Battalion will return to kill the rest."

Sitting next to Mr. Martínez as he talked was 15-year-old Julio.

Julio said his mother, father, 9-year-old brother and two sisters, aged 7 and 5 years, had been killed by the soldiers in La Joya. He said that when he heard the first shooting, he ran and hid in a gulley.

Julio said that he has returned to his village once since the massacre, to bury his family and two of his friends, aged 7 and 10 years.

Julio has never been to school, and unlike many boys his age in this area, he had not been involved in the revolutionary movement. Now he is confused: He doesn't know whether to attend the school for children that is operated by the guerrillas or learn to use a rifle so "I can fight against the enemy," he said.

Another La Joya peasant, 39-year-old Gumersindo Lucas, said that before he fled with his wife, children and other relatives, he took his 62-year-old mother, who was too sick to walk, to a neighbor's house and hid her under some blankets. He said the soldiers shot her there and then burned the house.

Holding his half-naked chubby-cheeked 4-month-old daughter, who was wearing a red T-shirt and a tiny red bracelet, Mr. Lucas said that he had not sympathized with the rebels. Now, he said, "I want my wife and children to go to Honduras, but I am going to stay and fight."

Mrs. Amaya said she has not been able to return to Mozote since the massacre. "If I return, I will hear my children crying."



ON CERTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

On January 28, 1982, President Reagan certified to the U.S. Congress that the government of El Salvador had fulfilled the five conditions required by the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1981 in order to continue economic and military aid to the Military/Christian Democratic Junta of El Salvador.

The Political-Diplomatic Commission of the FMLN-FDR believes it is necessary to state our position in this matter due to the importance it carries, not only for the Salvadorean people who suffer the effects of U.S. assistance to the government of El Salvador, but also for the American people whose taxes are used to finance the Salvadorean Junta despite the fact that Americans have in numerous occasions expressed their opposition to the government of El Salvador and to the increasing intervention of the Reagan Administration in our country.

We believe that the lack of information and depth as well as the inaccuracies in the Administration's certification totally impair the will of Congress which established the conditions.

For these reasons, the Political-Diplomatic Commission of the FMLN-FDR issues the following statement.

COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS

The information gathered by numerous human rights organizations during 1981 demonstrates that the Salvadorean Junta did not make significant efforts to protect human rights. On the contrary, the human rights situation in El Salvador clearly deteriorated:

- The number of civilians not involved in combat who were assassinated by the army and security forces is much larger than the total number of victims assassinated during 1978, 1979 and 1980. The total number of victims in 1981 amounted to 12,501, while in the previous three years there was a total of 9,239. (See chart)
- With respect to the right to political freedom, there has been an increase in the number of individuals who have been deprived of their freedom for political reasons. According to the Center for Documentation and Information of the Central American University of El Salvador, 1,972 people were

imprisoned in 1981, that is 597 over the total in 1980. (*Proceso*, #46, p. 13)

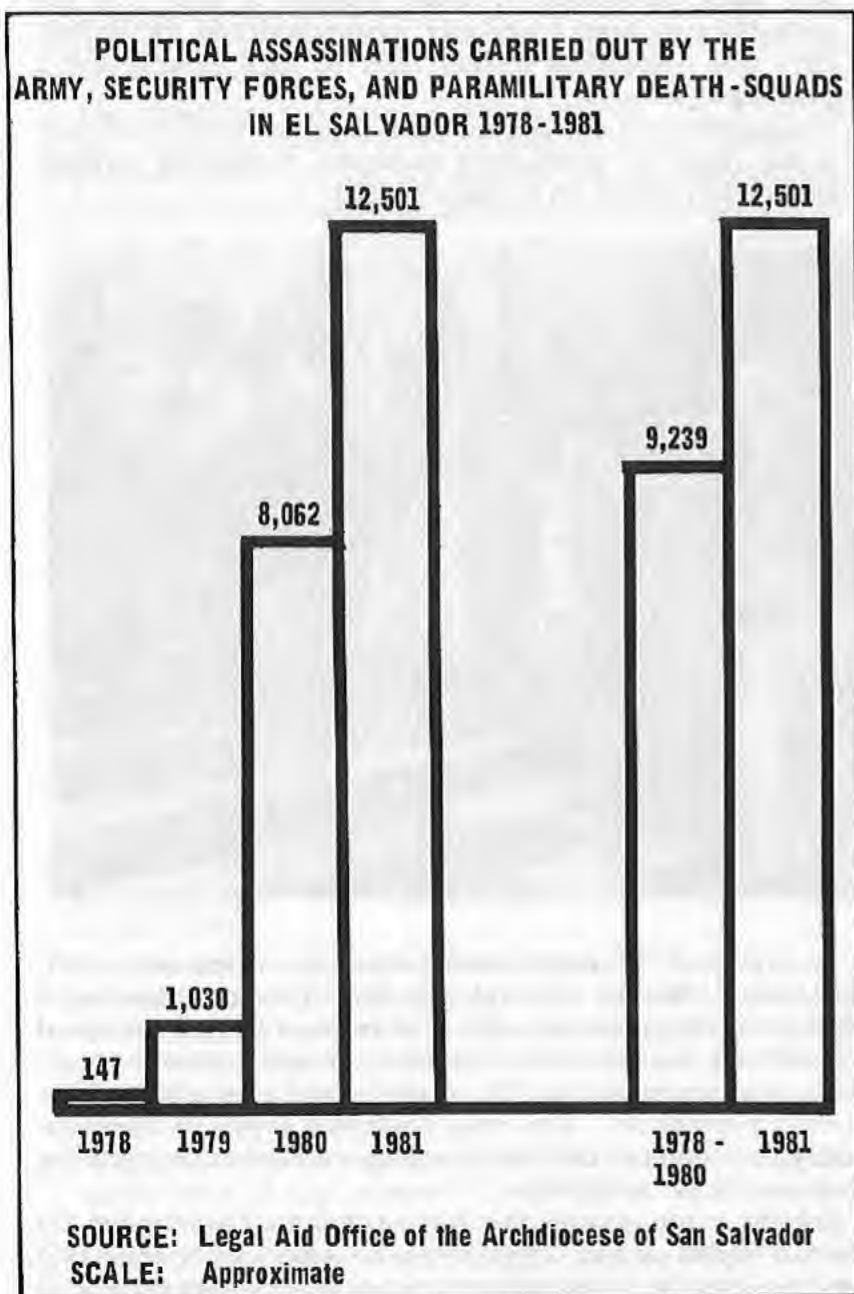
- The fundamental freedoms of expression, association, movement, etc., remain suspended given that the state of siege is still in effect. On the other hand, Decree 507 has been in effect since December 3, 1980, making it legal for the authorities to keep a prisoner incommunicado for sixteen days and suspending his/her right to legal defense for a period of 195 days.
- The government of El Salvador has deprived workers of their union rights by prohibiting collective bargaining through Decree 544 issued on January 5, 1981.



As a result of this deteriorating situation, in December 1981, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution regretting "the persistence of a situation in which governmental paramilitary organizations and other groups continue to act with total contempt for life, security and tranquility of the civilian population." The same resolution urged the Salvadorean government to take the necessary measures to remedy the situation. (U.N. A/36/792).

For the same reason, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS) reported that the worst human rights violations took place in El

Salvador and Guatemala. According to the report, illegal executions have taken place there in "truly alarming numbers" and "most of them were directly committed by the security forces." (OAS/Ser. G, CP/doc. 1201/81, October 20, 1981, pgs. 111-112)



Sipa Press / Black Star

Signed . . . "The Death Squad".

President Reagan's certification, aside from issuing excuses and blaming the "extremes"—thus absolving the Salvadorean government—only presented three concrete pieces of evidence in favor of the Junta. The first was the declaration of the Salvadorean government outlawing the paramilitary organization ORDEN. This took place during the first Junta (OCT. 1979-Jan. 1980), not during the present one, and in any case declaring ORDEN illegal was a formality without real results since ORDEN's presence is now more evident than before in statistics of human rights violations. The second piece of information the President's certification provided was the Code of Military Conduct established in October 1980. This, as many other declarations, has not been applied in practice. Suffice it to say that on December 10, 1981, the Union Comunal Salvadorense (UCS), a pro-government peasant organization financed by the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), recommended "to the government and to the Armed Forces that a system of detention be set up under which persons . . . can be detained . . . rather than being summarily executed." (El Salvador Land Reform Update—"Land to the Tiller Program," Dec. 10, '81, p. 9). Third, the certification states that the government of El Salvador has removed ultra-rightist military officers. As we will see in the next section, this measure has merely been a cosmetic change which has not resulted in a decrease in the repressive practice of the Armed Forces against the civilian population.

CONTROL OF THE ARMED FORCES TO BRING AN END TO INDISCRIMINATE TORTURE AND MURDER OF SALVADOREAN CITIZENS

We do not believe that the lack of a significant improvement in the human rights situation in El Salvador is mainly due to the Junta's inability to control its Armed Forces. Our position in regards to this matter is in accord with the report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS which states that the numerous illegal executions committed by the security forces and paramilitary organizations take place because these forces "act without punishment...with the acquiescence or tacit consent of the government." According to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, such acquiescence has meant that "governmental authorities do not proceed to an adequate and effective investigation in regards to who is responsible for such crimes." (Op. Cit.)

Putting aside the statements made by Junta members, reality demonstrates that it is precisely the high governmental authorities which are implementing a policy of indiscriminate torture and assassination against the civilian population. During 1981, this policy became more generalized, specially since the Armed Forces began to put to practice their "scorched-earth" policy. Let's look at some examples:

- According to reports by the Center for Documentation and Information of Central American University of El Salvador, from January to November 1981, 3,386 civilians were assassinated by the Armed Forces through "scorched-earth" tactics.
- From December 7 to December 17, 1981, the Armed Forces carried out the most cruel and massive slaughter in the province of Morazan: in just ten days, more than 1,009 peasants were assassinated. The army razed entire villages such as El Mozote where 472 people were eliminated, and Cerro Pando where 92 children below the age of fourteen were murdered. Ample information on this massacre has been published by *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* on January 27 and 28, 1982.
- Torture is an ongoing practice. The cases of 51 political prisoners under custody in the Santa Tecla Prison have been

documented. The political prisoners have denounced the tortures to which they have been submitted by the security forces.

- It is true that some military officers with a well-known reputation as torturers have been assigned to the diplomatic corps (we know of five such cases). The point, however, is that these have been cosmetic changes since torture continues to be practiced and the high military officers in charge of the most repressive and unpopular security forces have been given promotions. Such is the case of the directors of the Treasury Police and the National Guard who have held their positions since November 1979. The former was recently promoted to Colonel and the latter to General.
- At the same time, military officers known to have practiced repression and were removed from the Armed Forces at the time of the Young Officers' coup on October 15, 1979, are being re-incorporated into the Armed Forces. The most notorious case is that of Colonel Rafael Flores Lima who served as private secretary to General Carlos Humberto Romero (ousted in the October 1979 coup) and who now is the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.
- Equally revealing is the testimony of former army soldier, Carlos Antonio Gomez Montano, published in *The New York Times* on January 11, 1982. According to Mr. Gomez Montano, one of the men drafted with him was promoted to sergeant after having killed his parents and two siblings for being guerrilla sympathizers. During the promotion ceremony a Colonel "pointed to the sergeant's act and his promotion as demonstrations of 'bravery' and 'the hope for progress in a military career.'"

Therefore, the assertion President Reagan makes in his certification that the level of violence and abuse perpetrated by the security forces decreased in 1981 is far from reality. The accuracy of the statistics compiled by the U.S. embassy in El Salvador is questionable, especially in view of Ambassador Hinton's statements of January 8, 1982 when in reference to the massacre in the Morazan province in December 1981 he affirmed that "I certainly cannot confirm such reports, nor do I have any reason to believe they are true." Later, however, in an interview published by *The Washington Post* on January 31, 1982 he stated: "From the details I read in the story, there definitely must have been something, but I don't think it is anywhere near what they say in the propaganda." Once again, we ask ourselves if the Administration's policy is to conceal the Junta's deeds against the people, or to truly contribute to peace in Central America.

CONTINUED PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING REFORMS

In regards to this point, the President's certification centers in the Agrarian Reform program, begun in March 1980. Aside from our evaluation of the program's content and objectives, there are no facts which confirm the certification's contention that "continued progress" is being achieved in implementing the agrarian reform. On the contrary, the program has shown a tendency of reversal and stagnation.

The Basic Agrarian Reform Law contained three phases. **Phase I**, involving properties larger than 500 hectares, began in March 1980. Phase II, involved properties between 150 and 500 hectares. Phase II was crucial to the land reform process since coffee production, the economic basis of the Salvadorean oligarchy, took place in these properties. This phase has not been implemented and it will not be. In early March 1981, Jose Napoleon Duarte publicly announced its suspension. Two months later, on May 14, the Junta's Vice-President, Colonel Abjul Gutierrez, announced in a press conference held in San Salvador that "there won't be a land reform beyond Phase I and Decree 207." (See below for Decree 207)



Another obvious reversal in the land reform process has been the establishment of the Commission on Restitutions by the Salvadorean government, through which no less than 12, but as many as 45 estates, which had been expropriated have been returned to their former owners. This commission has no basis under the Basic Agrarian Reform Law decreed in March 1980. Furthermore, in regards to the implementation of the "Land-to-the-Tiller" program (Decree 207), the Union Comunal Salvadorena (UCS) which had promoted the program in the country, stated in a report at the end of 1981 that "according to survey data, more than 25,000 families have been illegally evicted, and tens of thousands of additional families have reason to fear another wave of evictions before Spring 1982." This report, which gains more importance because it comes from an organization of peasants which has contributed with the Junta in the process of land reform, goes on to say that "we must be very clear in recognizing that the failure of the agrarian reform is an immediate and imminent danger," and it further states that "what had begun in March and April 1980 with bright promise, and had continued to show bright promise even through the end of 1980, now threatens to become a nightmare of bureaucratic red tape, evictions and killings..." (Op. Cit.)



GOOD FAITH EFFORTS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND FREE ELECTIONS

This is a crucial condition in the legislation approved by Congress, which states that before receiving additional assistance from the U.S. the government of El Salvador must be committed to the holding of free elections at an early date, and to that end has demonstrated its good faith efforts to begin discussions with all major factions in El Salvador which have declared their willingness to find and implement an equitable political solution to the conflict.

The government of El Salvador has categorically rejected any possibility of discussion that could lead to a political settlement.

On September 29, 1981, before the United Nations General Assembly, Jose Napoleon Duarte stated: "My government's expressed desire for peace and concord completely excludes any negotiations or dialogue with organized armed sectors." In a speech delivered in San Salvador on October 8, 1981, he once again said that "Our government has repeatedly stated that at no time will it negotiate behind the backs of its people with armed groups, or even less, accept the negotiations of a new social order or the ridiculous notion of restructuring the Armed Forces to incorporate into them terrorist groups which are responsible for innumerable crimes."

On September 30, 1981, President of Panama, Aristides Royo, offered Panamanian territory and his good offices in order that communication between the parties in conflict could take place. On October 7, 1981, the Salvadorean Junta issued a communique reiterating its position against any form of dialogue: "It is clear that there is no chance of dialogue or negotiation with armed sectors and therefore any possibility of mediation is excluded." (UPI, Oct. 7, 1981).

Another communique issued by the Junta on October 22, 1981, stated along the same line that "The position of the Revolutionary Salvadorean Government is not to negotiate and not to favor any basis for dialogue with the armed groups of the FMLN or with any other similar sector." (EFE, Oct. 23, 1981).

On the other hand, the FMLN-FDR has made public and repeated proposals for peace talks aimed at solving the present armed conflict by means of a political settlement, and thus create the necessary conditions for a truly democratic electoral

process. In the letter presented before the United Nations General Assembly of 1981, as well as in the letter delivered to President Reagan on January 28, 1981, both the FMLN and the FDR have expressed their will to participate in a political settlement.

It is clear, then, that the Military/Christian Democratic government, besides not having shown good faith efforts to begin discussions, has explicitly opposed them.

The Administration is well aware of these facts, but in its certification to Congress has blatantly attempted to conceal them.

In regards to the elections scheduled for March, the FMLN-FDR has argued that there are no minimum conditions for such elections to have any meaning at all. We have clearly stated that "Our fronts consider elections a valid and necessary instrument of expression of the people's will, wherever conditions and atmosphere exist that allow the people to freely express their will." (FMLN-FDR Proposal for Finding a Political Solution to the Situation of El Salvador, Oct. 7, 1981)



Black Star

Even five political parties now participating in the March elections, submitted a letter to the Secretary General of the OAS on December 17, 1981, in which they declare that "...by putting aside the draft of the Provisional Electoral Law, approved by the political parties, and by imposing the thesis of the Christian Democrats, the Government of El Salvador has

lost completely the confidence of the political institutions of the Republic..." Therefore, the statement made by the Administration that "the new Electoral Law was promulgated by the Junta in December after thorough discussions among the political parties" seems questionable to us, especially in light of the fact that the same parties later express in the aforementioned letter that "The Christian Democrats are mainly responsible for blocking the electoral process because after having obtained international support, they have deceived the political parties that in the inter-parliamentary forum drafted the Provisional Electoral Law..."

It is thus clear that the government of El Salvador has systematically rejected any possibility of dialogue that could lead to a political solution, has not demonstrated "good faith efforts" even toward those political parties registered for the scheduled March elections, and has not created the necessary conditions for holding free elections.

EFFORTS TO INVESTIGATE THE MURDERS OF U.S. CITIZENS

It is now fourteen months since the assassination of the four American churchwomen, and twelve months since the assassination of the two land reform advisors. The Junta's promises and statements aside, the facts are that up to this moment, no charges have been brought against the six enlisted men involved in the church women's assassinations, and the two civilians arrested in connection with the assassination of the two land reform advisors have been recently freed.

We fully agree with the families of the assassinated church women when they point out in a letter to President Reagan that "every indication seen by the families points to a cover-up by the Salvadorean Government." We fully support the efforts made by the victims' families and by the American people demanding that the Salvadorean government bring to justice those responsible for these crimes.

If it is true that "Salvadorean officials fully recognize how important it is to solve these matters," as the presidential certification states, then how is it possible that even with the help of the FBI, nothing has come of such investigations?

CONCLUSIONS

We believe that the Presidential Certification does not address the real situation in El Salvador, and that the conditions approved by Congress, interpreting the will of the American people, have not been accomplished.

We believe that the Presidential Certification is only a formality aimed at justifying the Administration's support to the Military/Christian Democratic Junta, notwithstanding its responsibility in the continuous violations of human rights against the Salvadorean people.

Finally, we believe the certification shows the Administration's commitment to continue its militaristic approach, through increasing military intervention. This approach not only disregards the appeal made by the United Nations in its 36th General Assembly in December 1981 to "abstain from intervening in the internal situation in El Salvador and suspend all supplies of arms and any type of military support," but is also following the same path that led the U.S. government to a full involvement in the Viet-Nam war.

We therefore call upon the American people and the Congress, to oppose further military aid to the government of El Salvador. We also request a change in the Reagan Administration's policy towards El Salvador so that a comprehensive political solution that will guarantee the peace and justice our people deserve can be achieved. ■

A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES

The tragic situation in El Salvador is a continuing source of pain to each of us. As religious leaders, many of us have communicated our concerns separately to you, our elected representatives.

This extraordinary message is occasioned by President Reagan's certification to you on January 28, 1982 that your conditions for continued military aid to the government of El Salvador have been met. In religious and ethical, as well as political terms, we regard this action as a grave violation of the trust placed in the office of the Chief Executive.

We submit that the President could not properly make the certification to Congress that the government of El Salvador is making a "concerted and significant effort to control gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." There is overwhelmingly contrary evidence from established and reputable human rights organizations:

a) The American Civil Liberties Union and the Americas Watch Committee, in their "Report on Human Rights in El Salvador," released January 26, 1982, documents in detail systematic murder, torture and arbitrary arrests by the Government. They describe the denial of fair trials, and of the freedom of religion, expression, and association.

b) Amnesty International, U.S.A., in a January 1982 report on conditions in El Salvador in 1981, states that a "systematic and brutal policy of government-sponsored intimidation and repression" occurred. The report describes how people from many sectors of Salvadoran society -- human rights workers, trade unionists, clergy, wounded, medical personnel and the young -- have been detained without warrant, "disappeared", tortured and murdered.

c) The Catholic Archdiocese of San Salvador's Legal Aid Office reports that over 90% of the more than 13,000 people who lost their lives in 1981 were killed by government forces and their paramilitary allies.

d) The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* report that nearly 1,000 Salvadorean peasants were massacred by government troops in the Morazan Province in December, 1981. (NYT, January 27, 1982; WP, January 27, 1982).

Furthermore, we submit that the President could not properly certify that the government is making continued progress in implementing essential economic and political reforms, including the land reform program. Salvadoran land reform workers have charged that the land reform program is near collapse because of military-backed terror and murder, illegal peasant evictions and a "frequently hostile" government bureaucracy. In a December, 1981 report, the executive board of the Union Comunal Salvadorena (the country's largest peasant organization and an indirect recipient of U.S. aid for the program) said that "the failure of the agrarian reform program is an immediate and imminent danger," (WP, January 25, 1982).

In addition, the Salvadoran Government has clearly not demonstrated its good faith efforts to "begin discussions with all major political factions which have declared their willingness to find and implement an equitable solution to the conflict." Repeated offers have been made by the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) and the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN) to seek a negotiated settlement and these have been rejected.

And, despite reports of imminent indictments in the case of the murders of the four U.S. women religious, the interminable delays and obvious reluctance by the Salvadoran Government to pursue the investigation belie the President's certification that good faith efforts have been made to bring those responsible to justice.

We submit that by his certification to the Congress as above described, the President has compromised his moral and legal responsibilities to what appears to be ideological interests. To follow his leadership in uncritical association with government-sponsored murder and repression in El Salvador would compromise our own values as a nation and create further divisiveness among our allies in the world. Our strength as a nation derives from the moral integrity of our ideals and beliefs, and from the extent to which our actions in the world are consistent with those beliefs.

As religious leaders, we therefore call upon you to exercise your constitutional responsibility with integrity by immediately terminating military aid to the Salvadoran Government, including the training of 1,600 Salvadoran troops on U.S. soil.

We further call upon you to do all in your power to bring about negotiations between all parties involved. In view of the mounting evidence that deported refugees in many cases face arrest and death, we further urge you to grant the status of voluntary departure to Salvadoran refugees until their safe return to their country is possible.

Sincerely,

Over 350 religious leaders across the United States

(list of signers on following pages)

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Cornel West
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Yale Divinity School
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Harvard Divinity School
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Immaculate Conception Seminary
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Rev. Dr. William Sloane Coffin
Rev. Jesse Jackson
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Dir., China Program, NCC/USA
Dir., Racial Justice Commission, NCC/USA
Convener, National Conference of Black Pastors
Nat'l. Exec. Dir., Christian Life Communities
Exec. Minister, Washington State Assn. of Churches
Exec. Dir., Southern Cal. Ecumenical Council
Ohio Council of Churches
Exec. Dir., N.Y. State Council of Churches
Pres., St. Louis Council of Christian Churches
Pres. Church Council of Greater Seattle
Exec. Dir., Buffalo Area Council of Churches
Tuscon Ecumenical Council
Exec. Dir., Pomona Valley Council of Churches
Exec. Dir., Comasee Ecumenical Ministries

President
Visiting Professor, World Christianity
Prof. of Social Ethics
Professor
President Emeritus

Dean
Prof. of Theology
Prof. of Theology
Prof. of Mission

Dean and Professor of Divinity
Professor of Divinity
Faculty
Faculty
Faculty
Faculty
Mallinckrodt Prof. of Divinity

President

Rector
Associate Dean
Faculty
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Academic Dean
Faculty
Dir. of Pastoral Formation

President
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Pres., Colgate-Rochester Divinity School
Pres. Owens College, NC
Berkley Divinity School, CT
Dean, Cardinal Glennon Seminary, St. Louis, MO
Center for Peace Studies, Georgetown Univ.
Prof. of Theology, Perkins School of Theology, OK
St. Mary's Seminary, MD
Asst. Pres. Emory Univ., GA
Prof. of Christian Ethics, Princeton Theol. Sem.
Prof. Christian Ethics, Harvard Divinity School

University Church of the Nazarene, MI
Senior Minister, The Riverside Church
Operation PUSH
National Minister, House of the Lord Pentecostal
Church, Brooklyn
Exec. Sec., Fellowship of Reconciliation
Northside Community Church, MI
Pres. Southern Christian Leadership Conf. L.A. Area
Richardson East Church of Christ, TX
Exec. Sec., Methodist Federation of Social Action
First Church of God, MI
Latin American Task Force, MI
Dir. Michigan Pax Christi
U.N. Representative, Church Women United
Exec. Minister, Southern Christian Leadership
Conference, L.A. Area
Team for Justice, MI
Director, S.A.S.I.C.
Pres. Seabury Western Seminary, Evanston, ILL
Dean, Meadville-Lumard Theological Sem., ILL



"... From Mozote, no one escaped alive except me, because they killed all of the families there. They killed four of my children and my husband, Domingo Claro, who had poor eyesight -- he could barely see ..."

Testimony of the survivor Rufina Amaya from the massacre in the village of Mozote, Morazan Province, on Dec. 12, 1981

"It is difficult in such cases to argue that the troops are 'out of control,' or that it was an 'accident.' The Salvadorean Army acts with premeditation, carrying out orders to kill civilians and burn their fields, because each peasant is seen as a collaborator with the guerrillas. The Army's military plan, then, includes the extermination of the civilian population."

FMLN/FDR Political-Diplomatic Commission on the Massacre in El Salvador's Morazan Province

"Finally, we believe the certification shows the Administration's commitment to continue its militaristic approach, through increasing military intervention. This approach not only disregards the appeal made by the United Nations in its 36th General Assembly in December 1981 to 'abstain from intervening in the internal situation in El Salvador and suspend all supplies of arms and any type of military support,' but is also following the same path that led the U.S. government to a full involvement in the Vietnam war."

FMLN/FDR Political-Diplomatic Commission on President Reagan's Certification for Aid to El Salvador